

## CHINA, U.S. AND AFRICA: COMPETITION OR COOPERATION?

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**CHINA, U.S. AND AFRICA: COMPETITION OR COOPERATION?**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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As the United States has awakened to the extent of China's engagement in Africa, most military and political observers have characterized their relationship in alarmist and negative tones. While China's non-interventionist policy often frustrates U.S. political goals; the U.S. should recognize and capitalize on opportunities to work with China in order to improve African quality of life and standard of living. China's "peaceful development" has both positive and negative implications for the U.S. and Africa in the areas of oil competition, development and governance, conflict resolution in Sudan, and improvement of Africa's general health services. By using diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of power, the U.S. can leverage China's desire for "peaceful development" along with its capital investments and political influence in Africa to achieve our national interests of securing energy supplies; stopping human rights abuses; enhancing African governance; and ultimately, improving the lives of 900 million Africans.



## CHINA, U.S. AND AFRICA: COMPETITION OR COOPERATION?

The United States has historically invested comparatively little long-term intellectual, moral, or economic capital in Africa, especially after the conclusion of the Cold War. The 1995 U.S. Security Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa stated the U.S. had “very little traditional strategic interests in Africa.”<sup>1</sup> After the attacks of 11 September 2001, the U.S. awakened to Africa’s strategic importance in the Global War on Terror, and by 2006, the U.S. National Security Strategy reflected that U.S. security depended on partnering with Africans to strengthen their fragile states, bringing ungoverned areas under control, promote economic development, and expanding democratic governance.<sup>2</sup> In 2007 the Department of Defense (DoD) initiated the formation of a new combatant command known as United States Africa Command or AFRICOM. Advertised as a war-prevention rather than a war-making organization, the new command is designed to work with African states and regional organizations to help strengthen stability and security.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, the timing of AFRICOM coupled with heightened U.S. interest in Africa, has been met with suspicion vis-à-vis China’s courtship of the continent. Several African leaders proposed that the U.S. is interested in Africa not for altruistic motives but for colonial desires, energy exploitation, or a cold-war style competitive venue with China.

The Peoples Republic of China has had formal relations among African countries for over 50 years; however, Chinese engagement has dramatically increased in the last decade. The 2006 *China’s African Policy* stated, “China will establish and develop a new type of strategic partnership with Africa which features political equality and mutual trust, economic win-win cooperation, and cultural exchange.”<sup>4</sup> To match its rhetoric,

China revealed a trade and aid package that will raise its trade with Africa from \$40B to \$100B by 2010; provide \$3B worth of preferential loans and \$2B worth of export credits; establish the China Africa Development Fund which would provide \$5B to Chinese companies for African investment; and forgive many loans owed by Africa's poorest countries.<sup>5</sup> In return, China is securing long-term contracts with African nations for natural resources, expanding markets for its export powerhouse, as well as garnering political support for its "One China" policy.

China's quests for resources, energy, and markets are said to contradict U.S. policy goals by supporting African dictators, hindering economic development, and exacerbating existing conflicts.<sup>6</sup> A recent article in the *Joint Force Quarterly*, the premier publication for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called for a U.S. strategy to counter China's growing influence in Africa.<sup>7</sup> Unquestionably, China's influence is alarming as Africa is important to the U.S. in the realm of energy, governance and terror, and disease prevention; however, the U.S. must accept that China's motivations for African engagement are not based on Cold War type maneuvering, but on fostering its growth as a great power. As such, the U.S. should not look to counter or contain China, but look for opportunities to shape or influence their behavior. Simultaneously, the U.S. should focus on and partner with African countries and the African Union to provide long-term solutions to African problems. Through diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of power, the U.S. can leverage China's desire for "peaceful development" along with its capital investments and political influence in Africa to achieve our national interests; i.e., to secure energy supplies, stop human rights

abuses, build African governance, and ultimately help improve the lives of almost 900 million Africans.

### Peaceful Development

In December 2002, the China Reform Forum, a research unit of the Chinese Communist Party, traveled to Washington to meet with several senior Bush administration members and academics on China's emerging role in global affairs. Upon his return, Zheng Bijian, the leader of the delegation and close advisor to Chinese President Hu Jintao, reported that Americans viewed China's rise with great concern. His views materialized into an official government position espousing that China will rise peacefully, not acquire new territory, and never seek hegemony. By December 2005, the official rhetoric was changed to "Peaceful Development" with little substantial changes in philosophy.<sup>8</sup>

To support Peaceful Development, China pursues five primary foreign policy objectives: 1) Maintaining a favorable and stable international environment that facilitates economic reform, development, and modernization, 2) Reassuring its neighbors that China's rise will not undermine their economic and security interests, 3) Counter-containment to U.S. pressures by building bi-lateral relationships, 4) Diversifying access to energy and natural resources, and 5) Reducing Taiwan's international space. Implicit in these goals is an understanding that confrontation with the U.S. should be avoided.<sup>9</sup> China's engagement with African countries reflects these objectives, and the U.S. should understand China's decision making calculus as one of pro-China, not necessarily anti-U.S.

Opinions differ greatly about China's true motives. Realists propose that as China becomes more powerful, it will try to reshape the international system to better serve national interests, and the U.S. will start to characterize China as a security threat while becoming increasingly more distrustful of Chinese actions.<sup>10</sup> Conversely, others believe China's rise is inevitable, and the U.S. should welcome them as a responsible actor in international affairs. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs James Swan put forth an appropriate U.S. position in a 9 February 2007 speech at Columbia University,

The United States does not regard China's emerging interest in Africa as a security threat ... China has important interests in Africa which include access to resources and markets and the pursuit of diplomatic allies. None of these is inherently threatening to U.S. interests. U.S. policy is not to curtail China's involvement in Africa, but to seek cooperation where possible; moderate negative influences in some key areas, especially governance and human rights; and continue efforts to nudge China toward becoming a responsible international stakeholder.<sup>11</sup>

This is not to say all Chinese motives are pure and benevolent; however, the U.S. will go further in attaining its objectives by understanding China's true motives.

### The Competition for Oil

According to the Department of Energy's *International Energy Outlook* for 2005, world oil consumption will increase from a current value of 78.2 million barrels per day (mbd) to 119.2 mbd by 2025. Given the current rate of oil discovery and development, the world oil capacity is predicted to yield 122.2 mbd by 2025 with Africa providing 13.2% of the total. Currently, Africa provides 15% of U.S. oil requirements and roughly 30% of China's.<sup>12</sup> By 2025, China is expected to double its oil consumption while the U.S. will increase by almost 40%.<sup>13</sup> Africa's contribution to the international energy

supply is a vital interest to the U.S. and China, and the U.S. must understand how China differs in its approach to securing this resource.

As China's economy has exploded with 9-10% increases per year, its thirst for energy has influenced its foreign policy to meet these new requirements. In 1998, Beijing nationalized most state-owned fuel operations under the direction of the State Energy Administration. There are three main firms in China. The China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and the China Petrochemical Corporation (Sinopec) specialize mostly in over-land extraction, while the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) operates off-shore exploration and extraction.<sup>14</sup> These nationalized companies are able to acquire oil futures on a long-term basis by circumventing traditional free market procedures. With generous aid packages supplied by the central government, some experts contend, "China has adopted an aid-for-oil strategy that has resulted in increasing supplies of oil from African countries."<sup>15</sup> In securing its energy needs, China is willing to risk significant monetary loss caused by insurgency, banditry, and oil theft that neither western governments nor companies have been willing to take.<sup>16</sup>

Nigeria is Africa's leading oil exporter producing approximately 2.5 mbd of which the U.S. purchases almost 1.1 mbd. In January 2006 Nigeria exchanged oil exploration licenses to China for a commitment to invest \$4B in refining and power generation giving Chinese companies a 45% stake in new oil fields.<sup>17</sup> Angola exports 2 mbd with 25% going to the U.S. and 25% to China. To garner favor with the Angolan government, China provided \$2B in loans and aid including the construction of new railroads, schools, roads, hospitals, bridges, and a fiber-optic network.<sup>18</sup> China is following this

business model with other African countries which the U.S. has little or no oil imports. By courting Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, the Republic of Congo, and Sudan, China has acquired diplomatic and economic influence that the U.S. does not enjoy.

While U.S. oil companies have not lost their current contracts in African countries, future U.S. oil requirements will necessitate increased access to African oil, and the U.S. government, along with the rest of the oil exporting countries must encourage China to following international norms in oil acquisition. During the 2006 G8 summit in St. Petersburg, the members affirmed a commitment to implement and build agreements to enhance global energy security through increased transparency, predictability, and stability of the global energy markets by declaring:

Free, competitive and open markets are essential to the efficient functioning of the global energy system. Efforts to advance transparency; to deepen and spread the rule of law; to establish and strengthen predictable, efficient fiscal and regulatory regimes; and to encourage sound energy supply and demand policies all play significant roles in maintaining global energy security.<sup>19</sup>

Russia, Japan, and the European Union should join the U.S. in extending an invitation to China to establish common rules for energy investment. This will enable or force China to demonstrate its demand for energy is not threatening to other countries.<sup>20</sup> Simultaneously, the U.S. government must prioritize at the highest levels a proactive, long-term engagement plan focused on Africa that emphasizes and rewards improved governance, facilitates enhanced security, and provides renewed infusion from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank poverty reduction strategies.<sup>21</sup> Although U.S. oil companies are not nationalized, U.S. foreign policy should enable them to compete with Chinese companies on a similar level.

## Development and Poverty Reduction

During the last three decades, Africa has received over \$500 billion in aid from the international community. In 2008 Africa will receive almost \$18 billion in official developmental assistance slated for infrastructure and human development, and the amount per year is expected to rise to \$28 billion by 2015.<sup>22</sup> Yet, the continent is home to eight of the world's ten most failing states (Sudan, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, and the Central African Republic), eight of the world's twenty most repressive regimes (Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Libya, Swaziland, Somalia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe), and 35 of the world's 40 most underdeveloped states. In addition, half the continent's people live on less than one dollar a day, half do not have access to doctors, one-third suffer from malnourishment, and the average African's life expectancy is 41 years. In addition to aid, African governments have borrowed close to \$300 billion from wealthy nations and international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.<sup>23</sup>

Unfortunately, little accountability exists in these government to government transactions. The loans that were once meant for infrastructure and quality of life improvements have instead become an economic curse with yearly debt servicing exceeding amounts spent on health, infrastructure development, and social programs. Despite the incredible amount of aid, Africa's average output per capita was lower at the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century than it was 30 years earlier, and its debt was greater than its combined gross national product.<sup>24</sup> Clearly, past approaches to aid and loan packages have not appreciably improved the lives of most Africans. Debt servicing and infrastructure construction must be part of Africa's future, and the U.S. and China can facilitate both.

Africa's debt burden is a major obstacle in increasing economic growth and poverty reduction. Historically, many poor countries have spent more on international loan debt service than on social services such as health and education. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Sub-Saharan Africa carries \$201 billion in debt, despite repaying more than 90 percent of the \$294 billion received between 1970 and 2002.<sup>25</sup> Much like an individual consumer with more credit card indebtedness than income, Africa would benefit greatly from debt forgiveness.

At the Gleneagles summit in 2005, the G8 nations agreed to cancel \$40 billion in debt from 14 African countries who have shown commitments to democracy. Unfortunately, this is only one-sixth of the debt that cripples economic growth.<sup>26</sup> These countries are required to implement the conditions of the World Bank's Highly Indebted Poor Country Initiative which enforces macro-economic, structural, and social policies designed to promote growth and reduce poverty. The Poverty Reduction Strategies are criticized by African nations because they force cuts in spending and subsidies on basic public services, loss of government jobs, privatization of state-owned institutions, and devaluation of their currencies.<sup>27</sup> During the summit, finance ministers of several African countries communicated that Africa urgently needed loans and investments from China, which does not put these conditions on the loans. Abdoulaye Diop, Senegal's finance minister, said "Loans provided by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Fund are slow in coming and weighted down with numerous conditions. In contrast, aid and loans from China come through quickly with no conditions attached. And, African countries don't have to sacrifice their sovereignty and dignity in acquiring these loans and aid."<sup>28</sup>

As more African countries opt for non-conditional loans and aid packages from China, the U.S. will continue to lose leverage in improving governance on the continent. The U.S. needs to examine and perhaps weaken its criteria for debt relief under the HIPC criteria, and support 100% debt relief to African nations as called for by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and supported by the other G7 nations.<sup>29</sup> Simultaneously, the U.S. should encourage China to provide interest-free or very low interest loans so as not to exacerbate Africa's debt balance. Africans themselves feel Chinese and U.S. aid money should strategically target projects that stimulate growth by reducing the cost of doing business.<sup>30</sup>

Much of Africa's developmental problem is due to a dearth of viable infrastructure. Less than half the people in Sub-Saharan Africa have access to safe drinking water, greater than a third lack adequate sanitation, and few villages have telephone service. Only about 5% of Africa's rural residents have access to modern electricity, while over 95% are dependent on traditional fuels such as wood and cow dung for cooking, lighting, and heating. Recent studies in Burkina Faso, Uganda and Zambia show that walking is the principal means of transport for 87% of the rural households. In most Sub-Saharan countries, women spend about 65% of their time in movement for household and agriculturally-related chores.<sup>31</sup> The quality of existing roads is sub-standard, especially in countries that have had conflict in the last several decades. Only 16% of roads are paved and 80% of the unpaved roads are only in fair condition. One-third of the roads built in Sub-Saharan Africa in the past 20 years are in disrepair due to a lack of maintenance. The World Bank assessed that \$12 billion in maintenance expenditures could have saved \$45 billion in road reconstruction costs

over a 10-year period. The lack of infrastructure leads to greater transport costs; e.g., freight costs are 70% higher in Africa than in Asia.<sup>32</sup>

Previous loan and aid packages have not been effective at solving this problem as investment capital has too often found its way into the pockets of corrupt national leaders. The Chinese are investing heavily in Africa's infrastructure with tangible projects that can bypass corruption. In Angola, they are rebuilding roads and railways integral to mineral exportation and in revitalizing their agricultural sector.<sup>33</sup> Additional projects include building hospitals, schools, roads, bridges, housing, office buildings, training programs, and the laying of fiber optic cable. China recently purchased Gabon's entire Belinga iron ore deposit and agreed to build a hydro-electric dam, a railway to the coast, and a deepwater port north of Libreville for mining and exporting the ore. The site was identified in 1955, but due to lack of infrastructure no Western investors endeavored to develop it. In Zambia, China is renovating a major power station and improving its rural telecommunications infrastructure.<sup>34</sup> China is building road infrastructure in the Congo that is generally traversable only by air or river; helping Ethiopia build Africa's largest dam and hydroelectric plant; and recently launched a communications satellite for Nigeria.<sup>35</sup> These projects will provide African nations with critical enablers that when combined with governance improvements can lead to increased prosperity.

Chinese and Western ideas on improving the African continent differ as do the Africans themselves. While African governments want development as their first priority, Western governments prioritize policies that focus on improved governance with accelerated growth. Conversely, China holds that civil society is not a substitute for

national leadership, and China places more emphasis on a balance among reform, stability, and development than democracy.<sup>36</sup> Professor Yang Guang, a Chinese representative at the December 2007 Africa-China-U.S. Trilateral Dialogue stated, “The Chinese do not oppose democratization but argue it should not be a pre-condition for development, and that there was no agreed upon, universal definition of good governance.”<sup>37</sup> But in order for Africa to overcome generations of poverty, Africans must take charge of their destiny. Colonel Solomon Giwa-Amu of the Nigerian Army noted,

But only Africans themselves can guarantee that the new partnership with China will assist in addressing the African economic challenges without getting diverted into the quagmire of corruption. Africa’s emancipation must be African-driven! Local regulations, accountability, bureaucracy, and attitude cannot be outsourced. No relationship with China or any developed country will support developmental objectives without a strong, transparent, and visionary local leadership by African leaders.<sup>38</sup>

There is leadership and support for such initiative in what has been termed an ‘African Renaissance’ by the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD).

NEPAD is a subset of the African Union focused on eradicating poverty, placing African nations on a path of sustainable growth, halting the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process, and accelerating the empowerment of women. To achieve its objectives, NEPAD emphasizes democracy and good governance; African ownership and leadership of all sectors of society; and building the competitiveness of African countries world wide.<sup>39</sup> By supporting the A.U. and NEPAD, the U.S. can help Africans shape their engagement with China. American and Chinese competition should not undermine African development, and China should be encouraged to believe that good African governance and lack of corruption are in their long-term best interest.

## Conflict Resolution in Darfur

Conflict has been endemic in Africa and represents the single most challenge to long-term security and prosperity. In the last two decades, violence against innocents has occurred in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and continues in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan. Conflict has caused more deaths in Africa than disease and famine combined. More than thirteen million people are currently 'displaced,' including more than three million refugees. In the decade-long struggle in the Congo, almost four million people have died, mainly from lack of food, medical care, and exposure.<sup>40</sup> Despite growing international attention, the Sudanese government and the Janjaweed militia continue to wage a brutal campaign against the non-Arab tribes in the Darfur region. A 2006 U.N. estimate claimed over 400,000 people had lost their lives and over two million had been driven from their homes.<sup>41</sup>

From 2003-2007, the U.N. passed 19 Resolutions to stop the violence in the Darfur region of Sudan. In August 2006, Resolution 1706 established the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), but an emboldened Sudanese President, Omar al-Bashir, never accepted the mandate, and the mission suffered in effectiveness from its inception. China has an unfortunate history of complicity in Sudan not only by shielding Khartoum from U.N. action, but also by supplying arms to the Sudanese military. In the last decade, China has invested an estimated \$15 billion into Sudan in order to secure energy sources away from the open market. China currently imports 7% of its oil requirements from Sudan primarily through the state-owned CNPC. According to Deutsche Bank, 52% of CNPC's overseas crude reserves are in Sudan.<sup>42</sup> Traditionally, China has maintained a non-interventionist policy in sovereign countries. Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Zhou Wenzhoung stated on the issue of Sudan, "Business is

business. We try to separate politics from business."<sup>43</sup> In pursuing Sudan's oil reserves, China followed its non-interventionist policy by threatening to veto any resolution infringing on Sudan's sovereignty. However by July 2007, international pressure influenced China to pursue a more positive role.

China changed from being Sudan's primary protector to an outspoken critic of the Khartoum policy due to both U.S. and E.U. diplomatic pressure and a surprisingly effective adverse media campaign vis-à-vis the 2008 Olympic Games. Actress Mia Farrow, along with several organizations as diverse as B'nai B'rith International, the Arab American Anti-Discrimination League, and the NAACP, have formed the *US Save Darfur Coalition* and have begun referring to the 2008 Olympics as the "Genocide Olympics."<sup>44</sup> This information campaign asked the public to write letters to the Olympic corporate sponsors like Johnson & Johnson, Coca-Cola, General Electric, Adidas, Samsung, Panasonic, and McDonalds to let them know that by supporting the Olympics, they are supporting genocide in Darfur.<sup>45</sup>

After President al-Bashir sent a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in March 2007 rejecting a proposed new resolution, Chinese Special Envoy Zhai Jun visited Khartoum to press al-Bashir to accept the plan. Following additional exchanges with China clearly playing an active mediating role, Khartoum accepted the possibility of a new mission.<sup>46</sup> On 31 July 2007, China voted for U.N. Security Council Resolution 1769 which authorized a hybrid United Nations/African Union peacekeeping operation. The United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) replaced AMIS on 31 December 2007 and will eventually consist of 26,000 military and police personnel from

predominantly African countries with supplemental troops from international donors where needed.<sup>47</sup>

Although this resolution offered the first real promise of a solution to the Darfur crisis, Khartoum continues to frustrate UNAMID efforts at effectively restoring peace. As of January 2008, the force consisted of only 6,500 military and 3,000 police due to Sudanese rejection of the force composition. Additional restrictions on communications freedom, basing, and over-flight rights continue to restrict UNAMID's ability to accomplish its mission.<sup>48</sup> Khartoum fears and resists any forces from the West, while the rebel groups distrust forces from nations friendly to Khartoum. Consequently, nations are reluctant to provide manpower or technical assistance such as desperately needed helicopters to UNAMID that according to Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Marie Guehenno, "...will not have the capability to defend itself and that carries the risk of humiliation of the Security Council and the United Nations and tragic failure for the people of Darfur."<sup>49</sup>

The U.S., in concert with the U.N. and A.U., should reaffirm their support to UNAMID and provide the needed forces. China must persuade President al-Bashir to accept African and international forces and facilitate its mission. Should China refuse to apply further pressure, the U.S. should pursue divestment in companies that do business in and with Sudan. The primary companies should be those who work in the petroleum business. According to the Sudan Divestment Task Force, 70-80% of Sudan's oil revenue goes to the military and helps support the Janjaweed militia.<sup>50</sup>

On 31 December 2007, President Bush signed into law a measure allowing states, local governments, mutual funds and pension funds to divest from Sudan

businesses, particularly its oil sectors.<sup>51</sup> China's principal oil company in Sudan is CNPC; however, it is known to international investors under its parent subsidiary PetroChina. The U.S. investment firms JP Morgan, Templeton Asset Management, and Fidelity currently hold billions of dollars in assets, and the Sudan Divestment Task Force predicts stock holder pressure on PetroChina will have the greatest affect on Chinese support for Sudanese government.<sup>52</sup> The divestment movement is gaining momentum, and when coupled with the "Genocide Olympics" information campaign, offers the most effective pressure on Chinese behavior.

The U.S. and China must solve the Darfur crisis together. Deputy Chair of the African Union Commission, Patrick Mazimhaka, suggests that the U.S. and China synchronize their diplomatic initiatives and provide military assistance in Sudan. "Peacekeeping goes through two phases," he said, "one, negotiations for a political solution and two, field operations to ensure respect for the agreed ceasefire." Additionally, he notes, "In this latter areas, African cannot do this with its own resources."<sup>53</sup>

### Fighting Disease and Improving Health

Sub-Saharan Africa remains the most devastated region in the global HIV/AIDS epidemic. More than two thirds (22.5 million) of all HIV-positive people live in this region where more than three quarters (1.6 million) of all AIDS deaths in 2007 occurred. It is estimated that 1.7 million people were newly infected with HIV in 2007. Unlike other regions, the majority of people living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa (61%) are women.<sup>54</sup> Malaria cases number 300-500 million a year and remains Africa's number one killer with almost 2 million deaths per year. The disease accounts for 30-50% of all

African hospital admissions and is the leading killer of African children.<sup>55</sup> HIV/TB co-infection is a problem especially in Africa where as many as half of all HIV-positive people in Africa have tuberculosis, and up to 80% of TB patients have HIV. Drug-resistant strains of TB are highly-lethal and are increasing at an alarming rate in South Africa.<sup>56</sup> China and the U.S. share a common interest in fighting these diseases, and cooperation in this area would provide a synergistic boost to African health.

China has an established history of engaging in 'health diplomacy' by providing regular medical exchanges and training for African students, as well as free medical equipment to stock small clinics. Since 1964, China has sent over 15,000 doctors to 47 African countries and provided treatment to approximately 180 million Africans. China also routinely uses its military doctors to provide medical services much like U.S. military humanitarian missions.<sup>57</sup> At the Africa-China-U.S. Tri-lateral Dialogue in December 2007, the Chinese delegation recommended cooperating on health issues. They praised the U.S. HIV/AIDS initiative and recommended leveraging the two nation's malaria programs.<sup>58</sup> Cooperating on African health issues is a moral imperative for the U.S. and China, and this must be a top priority of U.S. foreign policy.

In his 2003 State of the Union address, President George W. Bush called for the creation of a five-year \$15 billion program aimed at reducing HIV/AIDS. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) gives assistance to 14 African nations and Vietnam by providing antiretroviral therapy (ARV) for people infected with HIV/AIDS. Congress has approved \$18.8 billion so far, and in November 2007, President George Bush requested an additional \$30 billion dollars. This would bring the American people's 10-year commitment on global HIV/AIDS to more than \$48 billion.<sup>59</sup>

In 2001, the U.S., along with other nations to include China, formed the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, which has contributed \$10 billion to fight all three diseases. At the November 2007 Global Fund board meeting in Kunming, China, the Fund's board members approved an additional \$1.1 billion for fighting these diseases, with 66% going to Africa.<sup>60</sup> While the money and attention are showered on these three diseases, they are mere symptoms of Africa's broken health care environment.

Concentrating on a few single diseases risks diluting efforts at strengthening Africa's long-term health care environment, and the U.S. and China should instead focus on improving the continent's general health, maternal mortality, and overall life expectancy. Africa needs much greater numbers of health providers, hospitals, and clinics where patients can get access to information as well as the latest pharmaceuticals. Africa has 25% of the world's diseased population, but only 1.3% of the world's health care workers. Western countries exacerbate the shortage by luring African doctors and nurses away from home with greater salaries than most African nations can afford. The Physicians for Human Rights estimates \$7.7 billion per year would be needed to double the number of health workers in Africa by 2010.<sup>61</sup> David de Ferranti, of the Brookings Institution, proposes, "Meeting serious health goals -- such as getting eight million more people on ARVs while bringing life expectancies in poor countries up to at least the level of middle-income nations and reducing maternal mortality by 15-20 percent -- will cost about \$70 billion a year, or more than triple the current spending."<sup>62</sup>

Intelligent financial aid, along with cooperative approaches to building Africa's holistic health infrastructure, will provide longer and higher quality of lives to Africans. Competition between the U.S. and China or even redundancy in efforts can and should be avoided on this issue. AFRICOM, with its unique line up of interagency expertise, offers an opportunity to exercise a congruent U.S. foreign policy towards African health issues. Cooperation with China should be its *modus operandi* in this regard.

### Conclusion

An old Kenyan proverb says, "When elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers," and Africa has been the battle ground of elephants for centuries. First, the European colonial powers, then the Cold War giants, and now potentially with China and the United States vying over natural resources, Africa stands to suffer if history repeats itself. While China's engagement in Africa can run counter at first glance to American goals of liberty, peace, stability, and prosperity, U.S. policy makers need to understand China's motivations. In the Cold-War, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. vied for influence in the continent without regard for what was best for Africa. The U.S. must realize China is not pursuing an ideological agenda, but instead is following a *realpolitik* strategy designed to increase their international status and satisfy their growing economy. In doing so, the Chinese are using traditional elements of influence; i.e., money and friendship, that when harnessed correctly, can lead to African growth and improvement. At the same time, China must look for ways to assuage American anxiety over its engagement with Africa. This will help mitigate the increasingly belligerent rhetoric from America's hawks.

Both the U.S. and China stand at the same cross-roads in Africa. Will the U.S. recognize the tangible aid, infrastructure, and trade opportunities that China is

introducing into the continent as opportunities to improve Africa? Will China recognize its initial interaction with poor and corrupt African governments is not a long-term strategy that maximizes gain? If the U.S. can leverage the international community to persuade China to become a responsible international actor, then Africans have the opportunity to take control of their destiny. If however, the U.S. continues to view China as an adversary instead of a legitimate competitor, all three nations will suffer. Ultimately, Africans must seize this opportunity and demand fair treatment from China, the U.S., and mostly importantly, from themselves.

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